

Growing WORKFORCE connections

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2002 GED grads set record

By Janet Williams Hoover, Communications Director

Kentucky set records for GED graduates and adult education enrollment in fiscal year 2002.

In that 12-month period, 14,651 Kentuckians earned GEDs, compared to 13,939 the previous year.

Enrollment in adult education programs was 86,413 in fiscal year 2002, surpassing the goal of 75,000 students. Adult education enrollment in fiscal year 2001 was 62,734 students.

CWD Secretary Allen D. Rose said the increases in GED attainment and adult education enrollment are significant.

“Over the past five years, the number of Kentuckians enrolling in adult education and earning GEDs has escalated considerably,” he said. “But the implications go far beyond the statistics.

“The significance lies in the fact that for every person who becomes better educated, Kentucky has one more person better prepared to earn a living, to pursue postsecondary

Loretta Flores, far right, a 2002 GED graduate from the Pikeville area, says she is continuing her education. Since receiving her GED, the trucking company she works for has given her a pay raise, life insurance coverage and medical benefits.



education, to be a role model and to contribute as a fully involved citizen.

“This achievement says to the world that Kentucky’s workforce is prepared for the future.”

Cheryl D. King, Department for Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) commissioner and Council on Postsecondary Education associate vice president for adult education, said that 71 counties are sharing in rewards funding for meeting enrollment and performance goals.

“Record-setting GED attainment and

enrollment numbers are due to partnerships at the state level and the on-going commitment of Kentucky’s local adult education providers,” she said. “The programs that earned rewards funding are leading the charge for our adult education efforts.”

DAEL provides adult education and literacy services free of charge through adult education centers in every county. For information about adult education, call toll-free (877) 740-4357, or check out www.kycwd.org.



“This new data will provide a valuable resource for businesses and economic development professionals.”

Ken Oilschlager, KWIB chairman and president of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce

Essential labor market info available

Kentucky employers now have access to new local labor market information to assist in business decision making and economic development. The information is available through www.kycwd.org.

The Cabinet for Workforce Development (CWD) and the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (KWIB) collaborated with researchers at the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville on the project. The data on underemployment, fringe benefits, labor shortages, vacancies and education credentials supplement information currently available from CWD and the 2000 census.

“This new data will provide a valuable resource for businesses and economic development professionals,” said Ken

Oilschlager, KWIB chair and Kentucky Chamber of Commerce president. “From a business perspective, it is particularly exciting to now have figures at the county level for underemployment.”

Most of the information is available by county, groups of contiguous counties, area development districts and workforce investment areas.

“The Cabinet for Workforce Development is committed to providing as much information about the Commonwealth’s labor market as possible and will continue to help meet the business community’s information needs,” said CWD Secretary Allen D. Rose. “We view this as an essential part of our overall mission.”

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Employer network ready for business

Business-led net creates connection between employers, job seekers with disabilities

By Mary Ann Scott, Managing Editor
and Jason Jones, Marketing Director, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation

Connecting people with disabilities and employers who want to hire them has been, for the most part, up to vocational rehabilitation service providers. Now there is an employer-led endeavor, the Kentucky Business Leadership Network (KYBLN), with that same purpose.

The network is a cooperative effort of statewide business leaders and a group of service providers.

Claudia Ernharth, KYBLN's director, underscored the necessity for this partnership. "Companies today need highly skilled employees, and there are people with disabilities who have those skills," said Ernharth. "The Kentucky Business Leadership Network is doing its part to promote this often neglected segment of our workforce."

Twenty employers in northern and central Kentucky, including Bank One, Kentucky Federal Credit Union and Holiday Inn North of Lexington, have joined the network so far.

Bank One Human Resources Business Partner Bill Blue said a key piece of the network is a Web site, www.kybln.org, where member employers can post job openings and can access an exclusive pool of prospective employees.

"An employer can post a position on the Web site, and it's cheaper (to do) compared to putting an ad in the newspaper," noted Blue. "This allows us to post jobs and directly connect with people with disabilities, who can post resumes on the site for us to review."

People with disabilities can post resumes on the site, either through service providers or on their own. Employers can conduct specialized searches to see which applicants may be best suited for particular jobs. KYBLN can also assist employers who are committed to keeping valued employees who develop disabilities.

The Cabinet for Workforce Development's Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is helping fund the program.



A Perkins Vocational Rehabilitation Center student learns about the printing process. She is an example of skilled workers with disabilities who are part of a pool of potential employees that KYBLN employer members can hire.

"We are excited to be one of the partners working with KYBLN. We share a common goal of helping individuals with disabilities obtain employment," said DVR Commissioner Bruce Crump. "Employing individuals with disabilities is a win-win proposition. Employers get qualified individuals who meet their needs, and individuals with disabilities obtain jobs consistent with their skills, interests and abilities."

"We're also holding employer training forums statewide (see Events at the bottom of this page) to help employers have a better understanding of job seekers and employees with disabilities and, moreover, to learn of inexpensive and easy accommodations that can be provided, if needed," Ernharth said.

Kentucky's network is part of the United States Business Leadership Network, founded in 1994. Thirty-seven states have networks, and recently Kentucky's network was recognized by the Department of Labor as one of the top five networks in the country.

Looking for more information? Interested in joining? Here are the facts.

A \$50 annual membership to join the KYBLN network offers employers many benefits.

- ✓ Access to an on-line pool of applicants qualified for various jobs.
- ✓ Job bank searches by job category, experience, skills and more.
- ✓ Details on tax credits and incentives for hiring people with disabilities.
- ✓ Disability awareness training.
- ✓ Network support.
- ✓ Tailored consultation services.
- ✓ ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) facility analyses.

For more information, contact Claudia Ernharth at (859) 257-3586, e-mail her at cernhar@uky.edu or send a letter to: University of Kentucky, IHDI, 333 Waller Avenue, Suite 207, Lexington, KY 40507.



events

Future KYBLN employer forums are listed below. No dates or meeting locations had been set at press time. Call Claudia Ernharth or Katie Wolf-Smith at (859) 257-3586 for details.

Interacting with co-workers with disabilities	Lexington	April
Employees with significant disabilities/ Employer discussion about competence and reliability	Lexington	June
DiversABILITY: Diversity includes people with disabilities	Louisville	Aug.
How the Americans with Disabilities Act can help your business	Bowling Green	Oct.
Strategies to support employees with brain injuries	Northern Ky.	Nov.

Check out the
KYBLN Web site at
www.kybln.org

Big help for a small plant

One company found state employment services

a big help in selecting, testing new hires By Kim Saylor Brannock, Staff Writer

Expanding a business and hiring workers is a positive step for any manufacturer but it comes with a flurry of activity that can overwhelm an employer.

Amanda Nelson, human resource manager at the Dana Corporation in Louisville, was a one-person office when her company decided to hire about 50 assembly line technicians. The company was looking for workers with some technical background and wanted people familiar with quality assurance and basic computer skills.

Nelson found a partner in the Cabinet for Workforce Development, Department for Employment Services (DES).

The DES office in Louisville recruited more than 600 applicants for the positions, screened the applications based on Nelson's requirements, selected people to interview and then contacted them and set up appointments with about 200 of those who applied.

"The sheer logistics of trying to call and schedule 200 people to interview was a tremendous help to me," Nelson said.

After company personnel interviewed people, DES administered and scored about 150 general aptitude tests for the company. The GATB consists of 12 tests that measure nine aptitudes including motor, cognitive, verbal and mathematical skills, as well as

manual dexterity and spatial perception and takes several hours to administer.

"I physically could not have done it. I was working 15 hour days with their support, so I wouldn't have been able to do it without them," Nelson said.

"We gave (the company) complete service — recruitment, selection, referrals and testing," said Jerry Clemons of the DES office in Louisville. "We can do that for any company that needs it."

The Louisville company, which assembles drive shafts, now has about 225 employees. Worldwide the company has about 70,000 workers who manufacture and assemble automotive components and systems. Fourteen of the company's plants are located in Kentucky. The Louisville plant opened in 1979 and supplies drive shafts to the nearby Ford Motor Company's truck factory.

Nelson described the DES office team that assisted her as excellent. "It was the first time I had used DES at this level of hiring. It certainly raises the bar if I transfer to another facility and need to use another state's DES office," she said.

"We save employers time and money. We are in the business of finding jobs for people and finding people for jobs," Clemons said.

Nelson deems the hiring process a success and recommends DES services especially for one-person hiring operations. "I would definitely recommend that any corporation use DES in a hiring situation, especially if they are bringing in a large number of applicants in a short time," she said. "We have had very low turnover from our hires. I've been very happy with our hires through this process."

Need help recruiting and selecting employees? Find more DES information at www.kycwd.org



The Department for Employment Services (DES) helped Nick Fasone, Dana Corporation plant manager, and Amanda Nelson, the corporation's human resource manager, hire 50 technical workers. "I would definitely recommend that any corporation use DES in a hiring situation, especially if they are bringing in a large number of applicants in a short time ... I've been very happy with our hires through this process," said Nelson.



Growing a strong workforce for the Bluegrass State

Cabinet for Workforce Development

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Employers that partnered with one-stop centers honored

Home Depot in Paducah called on the Paducah One-Stop Center for assistance with staffing when it opened a new store in town.

The Somerset Glass Plant uses the Somerset Career Center and the Department for Employment Services to take applications and screen potential employees for the plant.

Rosewood Health Care Center of Bowling Green has partnered with the Bowling Green Area Career Center for several years to recruit and hire permanent workers.

All three businesses were recognized with Workforce Investment Act (WIA) awards that honor exemplary employers involved in employment and training programs. The awards were presented by the Cabinet for Workforce Development's Department for Training and ReEmployment.

"I am a delighted customer of the WIA program and the Somerset Career Center," said Tammy Price, Somerset Glass Plant human resources manager. "The services provided by the staff are outstanding. I recommend and encourage all employers to use the Somerset Career Center for their employee selection and training needs."

Home Depot-Paducah is represented on the DES Kentucky Employer Council and urges other employers to use the services of Kentucky's one-stop career centers. Nationally, Home Depot is partnering with the U.S. Department of Labor to promote one-stop services.

"If other service centers in the other states can do half as well as Paducah, the venture will be a success," said Don Bartlett, Home Depot human resource manager.



Labor market *cont. from front page*

Researchers surveyed nearly 3,300 Kentucky households and combined those questions with 2000 census data in one survey. In a second survey, more than 3,600 small and large employers statewide and in various industries were surveyed.

"We have just generated three or four pieces of labor market information that did not exist and are in high demand," said Paul Coomes, professor of economics at U of L and one survey's researcher. "This information will be useful to economic developers who are trying to attract firms to our state because it gives new information about the labor pools in our communities and for people ... designing training programs to meet employer needs."

Users of the Web site will find out about hard-to-fill and high-demand job categories in their counties or regions, number of people in a county or region that are underemployed and reasons behind that statistic, and the percentage of employees in a county offered health insurance and retirement benefits. In small counties that did not have enough data to generate reliable information, data from several adjoining counties were combined.

Local labor market information is available through www.kycwd.org. Find local data on underemployment, fringe benefits, labor shortages, vacancies, education credentials and much more.



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